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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/606,260	06/25/2003	David Vincent Zyzak	9114ML	4525

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THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY
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EXAMINER

THAKUR, VIREN A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1761

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/08/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/606,260	ZYZAK ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Viren Thakur	1761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 January 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on January 18, 2007 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

2. As a result of the cancellation of claims 13 and 14 from copending Application No. 10/603978 (now Patent No. 6989167), the provisional rejection of claims 5-14 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting has been withdrawn.
3. As a result of the amendment to claims 5 and 12, the previous rejection of claims 5-14 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph has been withdrawn; however a new

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grounds of rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph has been set forth below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

5. Claims 5-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for extraction methods for removing asparagine, does not reasonably provide enablement for other means for removing asparagine from a food material. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. A number of factors must be considered in assessing the enablement of an invention, including the following: the breadth of the claims, the amount of experimentation necessary, the guidance provided in the specification, working examples provided, predictability, and the state of the art. See *In re Wands*, 858 F.2d 731, 8 USPQ2nd 1400 (Fed. Circ. 1988). The breadth of the instant claims is directed to *any* method by which to treat a snack chip such that the level of

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asparagine would be reduced in the snack chip. However, the specification does not provide adequate support for any method such as, fermentation and the addition of divalent cations, other than extraction methods. Consequently, it would have required undue experimentation to one having ordinary skill in the art to use the invention, based on the disclosure of the specification, commensurate in scope with these claims.

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 5-14 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

The terms "reduce" and "reduced", in product/article claims 5 and 12 is a relative term that renders the claims indefinite. The term "reduced" is still not defined by the claim, and thus the limitation "to reduce the level of asparagine" is still not clear. It is unclear as to from what the level of asparagine has been reduced. Asparagine cannot be reduced without having a definite frame of reference from which it would have been lowered. Applicant's arguments filed January 18, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In addition to the term "reduce" the following rejections are made with regard to these claims:

The term "less asparagine" and "less acrylamide" in the snack chip are also relative terms that have not been defined by the claim. Although the claims are read in light of the specification, the specification cannot be read into the claim. Thus, it is not clear as to what the asparagine and acrylamide is less than. The claim language has not provided a definite frame of reference from which the comparative phrases "less asparagine" and "less acrylamide" would be clearly defined within the scope of the claims. Thus, within the claim, without defining with respect to what the present snack chip has "less asparagine" and results in "less acrylamide," the term "less" is relative and renders the claim indefinite.

The instant claims additionally recite the limitation "a message associated with the container." It is not clear as to what is meant by the message being associated with the container. As an example, a message that is placed beside the container could be considered associated with the container. For examination purposes, the Examiner has interpreted that any message related to the container in *any way* is associated with the container.

The instant claims 5-11 recite the limitation "snack chips." The term "snack" does not adequately define the metes and bounds of the claims, since any food product that is in the form of a chip can be considered a snack.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

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8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

10. Claims 5-11 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schroeder et al. (US 4272554). The reference and rejection are incorporated as cited in a previous Office Action. Applicant's arguments filed January 18, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The Examiner notes that a recitation of the intended method of making the claimed invention (i.e. "product by process" type claims) must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure would inherently possess the same claimed properties (i.e. "resulting in less acrylamide in the cooked snack chips"), then the prior art meets the claim.

In this case, and in light of the rejection under 112, first and second paragraph, above, Schroeder et al. disclose treating a potato chip with calcium chloride before cooking, and subsequently frying a potato chip. Schroeder et al. additionally treat the potato prior to slicing and frying by blanching (Column 3, Lines 6-25). During frying, the asparagine present in the snack chip reduces as a result of the reaction between asparagine and the reducing sugars to form acrylamide. The Examiner further notes that *as presently recited* the claim language does not require that the broadly recited treatment actually facilitate the reduction of the level of asparagine but rather, that the snack chip requires treatment before cooking such that *during* cooking less asparagine would be present to react with the reducing sugars. During cooking, the asparagine would have been consumed in the reaction with the reducing sugars and would naturally be reduced so that less asparagine would be available to react with the remaining reducing sugars. Once again, as presently recited, less asparagine is present in the snack chips to react with reducing sugars *during cooking*. In summary, the claim limitation broadly states that the reduction in asparagine can occur during cooking, and Schroeder et al. meet these limitations. In addition, based on the claim limitations, it is not clear as to what the amount of acrylamide is being compared; therefore Schroeder et al. teach treating a potato chip that has "less" asparagine and "less" acrylamide, compared to, for example, another chip that might have "more" asparagine and "more" acrylamide. Since the terms

"reduce" and "less" have not been clearly defined within the scope of the claims, Schroeder et al. meets these limitations of the claims.

More importantly as a result of the indefiniteness of the terms "reduce" and "less," the point at which the asparagine is reduced or less is less significant compared to the fact that at some point in time the snack chip would have had a specific amount of asparagine, which would have been "less." Nevertheless, the claims do not define what would be considered "less" or "reduced," and so Schroeder et al. disclose treating before cooking wherein the snack chip has less asparagine.

Schroeder et al. are silent in teaching a container for containing the snack chips; and a message associated with the container; wherein said message associated with the container informs the consumer that the snack chips have a reduced level of acrylamide.

Regarding a container, after frying, Schroeder et al. disclose wherein the chips are ready for packaging (Column 3, Line 35). Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that the chips would have been packaged in a container. Regarding the particular message, it is noted that the printed word itself would not significantly change the claimed article of matter, and would not provide a patentable distinction, *per se*, over the known prior art package, materials and methods.

Regarding the specific amounts and percentage levels of asparagine and acrylamide in the resultant products of the instant claims, this would have been

an inherent result of the natural function of the added calcium and method disclosed. It is important to note that instant product/article claims 5-11 are not limited in their means of production, and may be produced by any number of means, including the addition of cations such as calcium, the addition of asparaginase, or an extraction of asparagine from the food product, each effective in order to inhibit the formation of acrylamide from asparagine, absent any clear and convincing evidence and/or arguments to the contrary. While the reference is silent with regard to the inherent resultant effect of the calcium addition upon acrylamide formation, apart from inhibited blistering after frying, it is noted that the reference need not appreciate every aspect or property of the disclosed invention. This does not detract from the teachings of the reference.

Regarding the type of chip, the reduction of acrylamide as a result of frying would have been a natural result of the process as disclosed by Schroeder et al. regardless of the type of chip. Therefore to use a tortilla chip or a potato chip would not have provided a patentable feature over the prior art.

11. Claims 5-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hilton et al. (US 4140801). Hilton et al. disclose a food material, such as a potato chip or French cut potatoes (Column 5, Lines 46-50), that is blanched (Column 2, Lines 57-65), and thus treated prior to frying (Column 6, Lines 28-54). Hilton et al. also teach treating the potato slice by fermentation (Column 3, Lines

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64-68) prior to frying. As taught by Hilton et al., blanching reduces enzymatic browning (Column 2, Lines 57-65).

The Examiner notes that a recitation of the intended method of making the claimed invention (i.e. "product by process" type claims) must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure would inherently possess the same claimed properties (i.e. "resulting in less acrylamide in the cooked snack chips"), then the prior art meets the claim. In this case and in light of the rejection under 112, first paragraph and 112, second paragraph, above, Hilton et al. disclose treating a potato chip by blanching before cooking, and subsequently frying a potato chip. During the process of cooking, the asparagine content within the potato chip would have been reduced as a result of the reaction with reducing sugars to form acrylamide. As the reaction progresses, less asparagine would have been available for forming acrylamide, since acrylamide would be consumed and thus would be a limiting agent in the reaction. As a result, "less" acrylamide would form, once either the reducing sugars or the asparagine has been completely consumed. The Examiner further notes that *as presently recited* the claim language does not *require* that the broadly recited treatment actually facilitate the reduction of the level of asparagine but rather that the snack chip requires treatment before cooking such that *during* cooking less asparagine would have been present to react with the reducing sugars. As a result of cooking, the asparagine would

have been consumed in the reaction with the reducing sugars and would naturally be reduced so that less asparagine would be available to react with the remaining reducing sugars.

In addition, based on the claim limitations, it is not clear as to what the amount of acrylamide is being compared; therefore Hilton et al. teach treating a potato chip that has "less" asparagine and "less" acrylamide, compared to, for example, another chip that might have "more" asparagine and "more" acrylamide. Since the terms "reduce" and "less" have not been clearly defined within the scope of the claims, Hilton et al. meets these limitations of the claims.

More importantly as a result of the indefiniteness of the terms "reduce" and "less," the point at which the asparagine is reduced or less is less significant compared to the fact that at some point in time the snack chip would have had a specific amount of asparagine, which would have been "less." Nevertheless, the claims do not define what would be considered "less" or "reduced," and so Schroeder et al. disclose treating before cooking wherein the snack chip has less asparagine.

Regarding the specific amounts and percentage levels of asparagine and acrylamide in the resultant products of the instant claims, this would have been an inherent result of the natural function of the added calcium and method disclosed. It is important to note that instant product/article claims 5-14 are not limited in their means of production, and may be produced by any number of means, including the addition of cations such as calcium, the addition of

asparaginase, or an extraction of asparagine from the food product, each effective in order to inhibit the formation of acrylamide from asparagine, absent any clear and convincing evidence and/or arguments to the contrary. While the reference is silent with regard to the inherent resultant effect of the blanching and frying upon acrylamide formation, apart from reducing browning after frying, it is noted that the reference need not appreciate every aspect or property of the disclosed invention. This does not detract from the teachings of the reference.

Regarding the tortilla chip, Hilton et al. are silent in teaching a tortilla chip but do disclose wherein the chip is made from a dough (Column 5, Lines 43-57) which is subsequently cut or sliced into a desired shape (Column 5, Line 50). One having ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that making a tortilla chip would have required the same process: first the corn would have been ground to make masa (dough) and subsequently would have been cut into the desired shapes. Nevertheless, corn also naturally contains asparagine and reducing sugars and thus, one having ordinary skill in the art would have expected similar results by fermenting corn to lower the levels of reducing sugars present. The reduction of acrylamide as a result of frying would have been a natural result of the process as disclosed by Hilton et al., regardless of the type of chip. Therefore, to use a tortilla chip or a potato chip would not have provided a patentable feature over the prior art.

Regarding the particular message "associated with the container" it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have packaged and

appropriately labeled the food products produced by Hilton et al. Packaging and labeling techniques were well-known and common in the art, especially regarding any potential special feature that might draw the interest of the consumer.

Regarding the particular message, it is noted that the printed word itself would not significantly change the claimed article of matter, and would not provide a patentable distinction, per se, over the known prior art package materials and methods.

12. Claims 5-14 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elder et al. (US 20040058054). The reference and rejection are incorporated as cited in the previous Office Action, mailed May 18, 2006. Elder et al. disclose a method for reducing acrylamide by inactivating asparagine by contacting the asparagine with an asparagine inhibiting enzyme, such as asparaginase (Paragraph 0011). The enzyme would reduce the asparagine since it would render asparagine non-reactive, and thus when heated would inhibit the formation of acrylamide (Paragraph 0010). Elder et al. further teach applying the disclosed method to potato chips and French fried potatoes (Paragraph 0008).

Applicant's arguments filed January 18, 2007 have been fully considered but are not persuasive. At pages 5-6 of the response, Applicants state that the Examiner has not given proper weight to the claim limitations regarding the written message and container as recited in the claims.

This is not deemed persuasive for the reasons of record. Initially, regarding the container as part of the claimed invention, this has been addressed of record. See page 5 of the June 30, 2004 Office action.

Regarding the particular message "associated with the container" (unclear whether typed, written, scribbled or encoded, and whether this is actually present on the container, or perhaps somewhere on a display shelf near the container, i.e. "associated with" such), this, too, has been addressed of record. See page 5 of the June 30, 2004 Office action. As stated therein, regarding claims 5-14, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have packaged and appropriately labeled the food products produced by Elder et al. Packaging and labeling techniques were well-known and common in the art, especially regarding any potential special feature that might draw the interest of the consumer. Regarding the particular message, it is noted that the printed word itself would not significantly change the claimed article of matter, and would not provide a patentable distinction, per se, over the known prior art package materials and methods.

This statement does not imply in any way that the Examiner failed to consider this part of the claimed invention. In fact, by addressing the point in the first Office action, this demonstrates that such was indeed considered. Thus Applicant's statements are inaccurate and misleading. Applicant refers to two court cases which address certain issues with regard to printed matter on an article. However, neither of these are on point with regard to the instant claims,

and are not relevant to the issue at hand. The printed matter on the label of the container is not integral to the function of the claimed article, for example, as opposed to the situation in *In re Miller* as cited by applicant, where the printed matter serves as an indicator for measurement, thus affecting the use and function of the article as a whole. Such is simply not the issue in the instant case. A simple message on the claimed article of commerce would not alter or change the tangible, material functions of the article, namely those involving the snack chips (or fries) and the container. A message "informing the consumer that the snack chips have a reduced level of acrylamide" would not functionally or significantly alter the article, and would not patentably differ from the same article with a message of "tasty chips" written on a label, for example. While the words on the container may describe that which is in the container, they do not provide any actual function related to the container or snack chip therein. The mere arrangement of the words on a container, as applicant has claimed, does not amount to a functional property of the invention.

Finally, applicant is referred to MPEP 2112.01, part III, which states where the only difference between a prior art product and a claimed product is printed matter that is not functionally related to the product, the content of the printed matter will not distinguish the claimed product from the prior art. *In re Ngai*, ^{**>}367 F.3d 1336, 1339, 70 USPQ2d 1862, 1864 (Fed. Cir. 2004). See also *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385-86, 217 USPQ 401,404 (Fed. Cir. 1983)("Where the printed matter is not functionally related to the substrate, the printed matter

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will not distinguish the invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.... [T]he critical question is whether there exists any new and unobvious functional relationship between the printed matter and the substrate.").

Double Patenting

13. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

14. Claims 5-14 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 47, 48 and 50 of copending Application No. 10/606137 in view of Elder et al. (US

20040058054). The '137 application discloses an article of commerce comprising a food product that has a reduced level of asparagine; a container for containing the food product; and a message associated with the container; wherein said message associated with the container informs the consumer that the food product contains a reduced level of asparagine. The '137 application does not teach wherein the food product is a snack chip and treating the food product to reduce the level of asparagine. Elder et al. teaches treating a food product, such as potato chips and French fried potatoes (Paragraph 0008) (which are considered a snack chip) with an asparagine inhibiting enzyme and subsequently heating said product (Paragraph 0010 and 0011). As a result, the amount of asparagine available to react with the reducing sugars to form acrylamide would have been reduced. Consequently if the available asparagine has been reduced, the formation of acrylamide would also have been reduced. Given this teaching, whether the message indicated reduced asparagine or reduced acrylamide would not have been a patentable feature over the prior art, since Elder et al. teach reducing asparagine and the result after heating would have been reduced acrylamide. The Examiner notes that the instant claims do not recite a specific method of treating the snack chip therefore to treat the food product in any way would result in the instant claims being obvious to the skilled artisan. Given the teachings of Elder et al. it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to treat the food material of the '137 application

using an asparagine inhibiting enzyme for the purpose of reducing the level of asparagine and thus reducing the level of acrylamide.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Viren Thakur whose telephone number is (571)-272-6694. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on (571)272-1398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Viren Thakur
Examiner
Art Unit: 1761



KEITH HENDRICKS
PRIMARY EXAMINER